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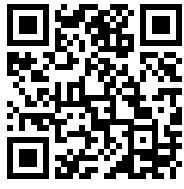

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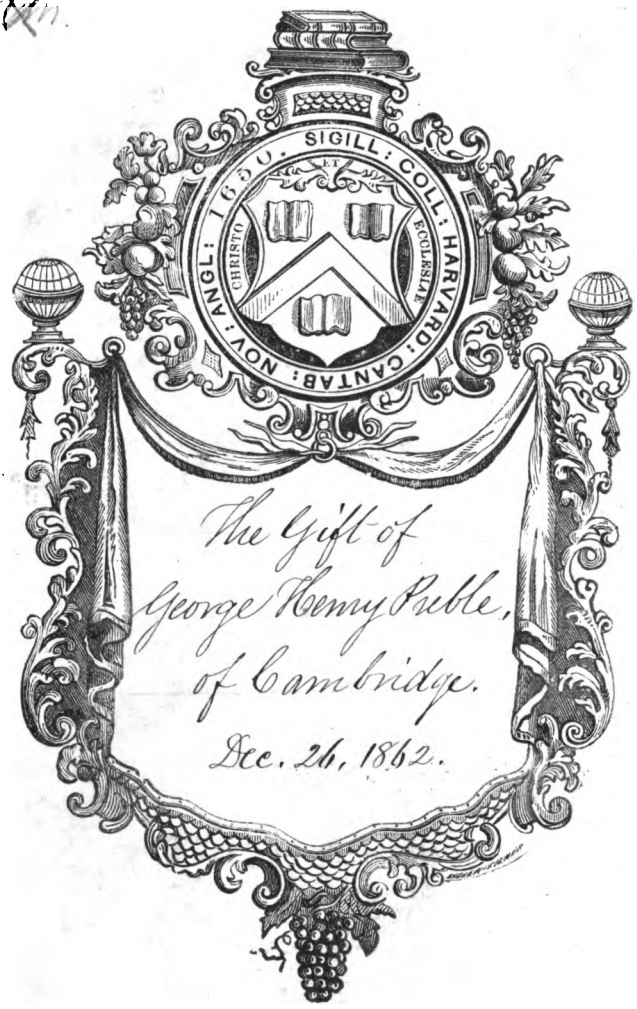

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THE

BROKEN ENGAGEMENT;

OR,

SPEAKING THE TRUTH FOR A DAY.

BY

MRS. EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH.

AUTHOR OF "THE LOST HEIRESS," "DESERTED WIFE," "GIPSY'S PROPHECY," "INDIA,"
"RETRIBUTION," "VIVIA, THE SECRET OF POWER," "DISCARDED DAUGHTER,"
"WIFE'S VICTORY," "CURSE OF CLIFTON," "HAUNTED HOMESTEAD,"
"THE LADY OF THE ISLE," "THE MOTHER-IN-LAW,"
"THE TWO SISTERS," "MISSING BRIDE,"
"HICKORY HALL, OR THE OUTCAST,"
ETC., ETC., ETC.

"Mrs. Southworth's fictions have gained an almost unprecedented popularity, by their intense and exciting interest, and the strength of limning displayed in her delineations of character. Each has a spell of fascination which irresistibly fetters the attention, and impresses the mind of the reader. It lies chiefly in the force of conception, which grapples all the points of individual character; but a rare and felicitous art in shading and disposition is also evinced; and when to this is added the vigorous expression and warm coloring with which the faithful portraitures are exhibited, we can analyze this writer's acknowledged mastery. Her earnest purpose to warn against evil, recommend the right, and teach lessons of Christian truth; her rich invention and tender sympathy, her brilliant fancy, her quick and deep insight into the human heart, her fidelity to nature and reality, and her versatile powers in dialogue, are elements, too, in her unrivalled popularity. The 'Broken Engagement' is a story of touching pathos and absorbing interest, carrying with it a moral worthy to be inculcated. The authoress of this volume has won golden opinions in her literary career. The present tale is destined to be widely popular. We recommend this book to all."—*Critic.*

Philadelphia:
T. B. PETERSON AND BROTHERS,
306 CHESTNUT STREET.

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THE

BROKEN ENGAGEMENT:

OR,

SPEAKING THE TRUTH FOR A DAY.

CHAPTER I.

"THAT'S easy enough."

"*Is* it!"

"Of course it is. Besides, deuce take it, I always *do* speak the truth."

"*Do* you!"

"Why, certainly I do! Do you mean to insinuate that I don't?"

"Oh, no! by no manner of means! There, you see *I* do not always speak the truth when it would be *rude*——"

"Blewitt? I do believe you mean to question my veracity! And I won't stand that from any man!"

"*Or dangerous*," pursued Blewitt, without heeding the interruption.

"What the mischief do you mean? I feel as if there was something in your talk at which I ought to take offence."

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"Then don't, my dear Morris! I mean to say, if you *always* speak the truth you are a miracle of morality; I had almost said a monster of iniquity!"

"I never told a falsehood in my life; I have spoken the truth from my childhood up;" said Morris, growing red in the face.

"Good Lord! he has not the remotest idea of how fast he is lying now!" thought Blewitt to himself.

"Falsehood!" continued Morriss, warming with the theme —"why, falsehood is the lowest, the meanest, the most degrading, the—the—the——"

"Oh yes, we know all that; but it is a necessary evil."

"And truth—Divine truth—is the most lovely, the most beautiful, the most elevating——"

"*Ex*-actly! Yet if this lovely, this beautiful, this elevating truth was to prevail for one day in London, there would be—such a go as never was!"

"Blewitt, you shock me."

"Why, but truth would shock the earth. Why, the destruction of Jerusalem, the sack of Rome, the Reign of Terror, would be child's play to the horrible hubbub there would be in this world if the truth were spoken for one day! It would be confusion, distraction, perdition, and chaos come again!"

"Blewitt, I never will believe the world so bad as that—never!" exclaimed Morriss, earnestly.

"The Bible says it is—and I know it is—so wicked, so deceitful, and so self-deceiving, that it could not bear the light of truth for a single instant; for when that full light of truth is poured upon the world—the Day of Judgment will have come, for this earth will be no longer habitable."

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"Blewitt, I cannot agree with you; I do not believe in your theory."

"Well, test it, my dear fellow—test it in your own little orbit of duty. Speak the truth, and nothing but the truth, for one week, or even for one day, and see what will come of it!"

"What *can?*"

"I'll tell you, without pretending to be a prophet. If you, Joseph Morriss, nephew and heir-apparent of John Morriss, retired cheesemonger—betrothed husband of Lizzy Bell, the prettiest girl in Little Britain; head salesman in the great haberdashery establishment of Black, Brown, White, and Green—were to dare to tell the truth for one single day, you would be kicked out of your master's shop, discarded by your sweetheart, and disinherited by your uncle; and that if you further persisted in speaking the truth for a week, you would be clapped in a lunatic asylum as a madman too dangerous to be permitted to go at large."

"Good gracious, Blewitt! and do you really believe that I have retained all my present advantages—my uncle's affection, Lizzy's favor, my employers' trust, and my very liberty to boot, only at the price of being habitually false—and that I should forfeit them all in a week by being true?"

"Yes; that's—just—exactly—what I mean."

"I ought to kill you for it!"

"Don't; it would get you into an ugly scrape. Besides, it would be much wiser to test the facts; and, moreover, I would like myself to see the experiment tried. Come, now, to make it more interesting, I will lay you a wager——"

"Betting is the fool's argument; I never bet."

"Not even at the Derby?"

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Morriss was silent; but to do him justice, the all-licensing carnival of the Derby was the only exception to the rule.

"Then, as you never bet—except at the Derby—I will not tempt you to do so; but I wish to see the thing tried, and therefore I will tell you what I'll do.—If you will give me your word of honor to speak the truth, and nothing but the truth, for one whole week, and if you keep your word by doing so for one day, without forfeiting all the advantages I have named, and if you persevere in doing so for one week without getting put into a lunatic asylum, why, at the end of the given time, I will pay you down five hundred pounds damages for having wronged you, although I am not rich."

"But I don't want you to give me five hundred pounds."

"Or I'll take a thrashing from you for the same cause, although I'm the biggest."

"But I don't want to give you a thrashing."

"Oh, well; if you'll neither give nor take, I will bribe you in another way; I will promise never to let my eyes wander towards pretty Lizzy Bell's pew, although that is my principal pleasure in going to church."

"I take you up at that!"

"It is a bargain, then?"

"Yes; but mind, by speaking the truth for a day or a week—as, indeed, I always do—I do not mean to say that I am going about voluntarily to insult every body by telling them of their little faults, or peccadilloes, or misfortunes."

"Certainly not. You are to answer truly only such questions as are put to you, and such observations as are addressed to you in your daily routine of business or social intercourse with the little world around you."

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"That is simple enough. But stop—you are not to go round among our acquaintances, putting them up to asking me awkward questions which it would be painful to answer?"

"On my honor, no! All shall be fair, for I wish the experiment fairly tested. I shall not speak of the subject directly or indirectly to a single soul during the proscribed week, nor must you, should you be hard up before the end of the week, spoil all by saying to any one—'Forgive me, for I have taken the pledge to speak the truth for a week.'"

"Certainly not. I should never under any circumstances make an apology for speaking the truth."

"Then we understand each other?"

"Perfectly. When does my probation begin?"

"At what time do you rise?"

"At seven."

"Then from seven o'clock to-morrow, being Monday, April 1st, you must begin to speak the truth, and persevere until Monday, April 8th, by which time you will be comfortably housed in Bedlam, undergoing the refreshing discipline of the straight-jacket and the shower-bath," said Blewitt.

Morriss laughed incredulously; and the friends having reached the end of their argument and the corner of the street at the same moment, parted, and went each his own way.

Blewitt and Morriss having been schoolmates, neighbors, and friends from boyhood, they were both of the same age—hopeful twenty-five. But Blewitt, the junior partner in a stock-broker's firm, was the tallest, handsomest, and richest

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man of the two, and consequently had seen more of life than his simpler friend.

The origin of the argument with which the chapter opens was this:—The young men had been attending evening service in a Dissenting chapel, in which a highly celebrated popular preacher had held forth upon the fearful text that "Liars shall have their portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for ever and ever."

In his discourse he spared neither rich nor poor, age nor sex, man, woman, nor child, in his fierce denunciation of the daily, universal, crying sin of falsehood. In his notoriously blunt manner and pure Saxon, he told the lords and ladies present, whom curiosity had drawn to hear this modern John Knox, that they lied to each other, to their friends, and to the world; that they lied in their chambers, in their drawing-rooms, and, Heaven help them, even in the church of God! He told the tradesmen and tradeswomen that their business was founded upon falsehood; the professional men that they lived by lying; and the little children that they told falsehoods by signs long before they were able to do so by speech.

He threatened them all with the warmest corner of that warm lake. Near the close of his sermon, the storm of denunciation dissolved in a shower of compassion, and with tears in his eyes, he implored his hearers "to reform" this sinful habit "altogether," to make a beginning; to try, by the grace of God, to speak the truth, if only for a week—for a day—and see how much better it would be!

The congregation had left the church, making various comments upon this extraordinary sermon.

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CHAPTER II.

"The truth shall make you free."

JOSEPH MORRISS lived in Little Britain, with his bacholor uncle and maiden aunt, Mr. John and Mrs. Mary Morriss, of whom it need only be said, that they were ordinary specimens of elderly man and womanhood in their own class; fat as most persons are between fifty and sixty; good-humored when nobody crossed them; kind to their nephew when he pleased them, and otherwise when he did otherwise. They had retired before Joseph returned from chapel that Sunday night, and so he went immediately up to his chamber in the third-floor front, and to bed, and to sleep, without ever dreaming of the troubles that might be in store for him.

He arose the next morning at his usual hour, dressed, and went down to the breakfast-parlor, where he found his aunt making breakfast, and his uncle reading the morning paper.

"Good morning, aunt! good morning, uncle! how do you do this morning?"

"Ah, good morning, Joe! hearty! hearty! how are you?"

"Very well, I thank you, sir," was on Joe's lips, but feeling that he had the headache, and knowing that he was pledged to abstain from conventional falsehoods, he answered truly—

"I am not well, sir; I have a headache."

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"What! headache at your age? God bless my soul alive! what are the young men of the present day made of? Why, at your age I did not know I *had* a head, except when it required combing! And even now! look at me now, how stout and well I look!"

"Yes, sir," was on Joseph's tongue; but he remembered that he must reply truthfully to every observation addressed to him, and so he answered—

"I do not think you look well at all, sir!"

"Eh?"

"I do not think you look well."

"Eh! the deuce! what do you mean? why don't I look well, sir? tell me *that!*"

"Because you are too fat, too short-necked, too full-faced, and—and——"

"Apoplectic you mean to say, sir?"

"Yes, uncle."

"By George!" exclaimed the shocked and indignant old man.

"Oh, Joseph, what *do* you mean by saying such shocking things?" cried his aunt in consternation.

"He asked me questions and I told him the truth," replied the young man.

"Yes, and I believe that he wishes that I was dead!" exclaimed the old man.

"No, uncle; I do not. I should be sorry, that is, reasonably sorry, if you should die."

"*Reasonably* sorry! And I suppose you would be reasonably glad of the fat legacy you expect to get from me!"

"By George!" cried the old man, jumping up and trotting up and down the floor—"he gets worse and worse! he

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adds insult upon insult with perfect recklessness. You sir, answer me! what the d——l do you mean by such conduct?" he demanded suddenly stopping in front of his nephew, and trembling with suppressed anger.

"I mean to tell the truth without fear or favor."

"You—you unnatural! ungrateful! graceless—*oh!*" sputtered the old man, shaking with fury.

"Oh, Joseph, what makes you behave in such a shocking manner! What have we done to deserve it?"

"I am only telling the truth, aunt."

"You *know* you don't mean what you say!"

"Yes, I do, aunt!"

"You *don't*, you know you'd be inconsolable if I or your good uncle were to die."

"No, I shouldn't, aunt!"

"*Ah!* you unnatural monster, you mean to kill us!" shrieked Mrs. Mary Morriss, throwing herself into a chair, putting her handkerchief to her eyes, and bursting into tears.

"No, I don't mean to kill you, aunt! I only said I shouldn't be inconsolable if you and uncle were to die; and of course I shouldn't; no young man ever breaks his heart because his aunt and uncle die."

"Ah! you cold-blooded young villain, you freeze my blood!" sobbed the poor woman with hysterical passion.

"Let him alone, Molly! Say no more to him!" cried the old man, dropping into a chair and wiping his crimsoned and perspiring face—"say no more to him—we have nourished a viper in our bosoms to sting us to death at last! But he is our dead brother's only son, and so for poor Joe's

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sake, if he will take back his words and say he is sorry for having uttered them, I will forgive him."

"Take back your words, my dear; say you did not mean it; your old aunty knows you didn't, herself," said Mrs. Mary, removing her handkerchief from her eyes, and looking pitifully at the young man.

"But I *did* mean it, aunt; and I cannot take my words back, because they were true."

"Then get out of my house, sir! you shall not remain in it another instant! And as for the rest, I will go this day and alter my will! I will cut you off with a shilling, sir, and I will leave all my property, barring a life annuity, to your aunt, to found a hospital for decayed monkeys! I will, sir! Come! move, sir; tramp! get out of my house!" exclaimed the old man, maddened with rage, and rushing upon his nephew, as though he would have expedited his exit with the toe of his boot.

"Not till he's had his breakfast, I beg of you, John! It's bad going out on a raw morning with a fasting stomach."

"Breakfast! he should not eat another mouthful in this house if he was starving," shouted the old man in a fury.

Tears started to Joseph's eyes; he longed to throw himself into his aunt's lap, or around his uncle's neck, as he had been used to do whenever he got into disgrace in his rather naughty boyhood; but then he was pledged not to explain or apologise in telling the truth. So he only took his hat, and with a "Good-bye, uncle; good-bye, aunt," he left the house.

"An ungrateful, unnatural young monster!" roared the

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irate old man, in such a frantic rage as we can only get into with those we love.

"The cold-blooded young villain! He nearly froze my blood!" sobbed the old lady.

"My dead brother's only son to turn out so! Ugh! ugh! ugh!" choked the old man.

"It is enough, it is, to make poor Joe's bones rattle in his grave!" wept Mrs. Mary.

"What the d——l did he mean by such an attack upon us?" demanded Mr. John.

"I don't know," responded Mrs. Mary, in despair; but, poor fellow! perhaps, after all, he isn't right in his head! he said he had the headache, and he certainly acted very strange—which I noticed he looked queer about the eyes when he came down-stairs," said the poor old woman, drawing boldly upon her imagination for the last-mentioned symptom.

"Did you, though?" inquired the old man, turning around briskly.

"*Yes I did*, and I shouldn't wonder if his poor head was agoing, dear boy! And it's all along of his measuring out endless yards of ribbon and lace, and talking endless rubbish to get them off all day long; and poring over everlasting rows of figures in them fetched ledger-books all night. There's just where it is; and it'll be a pretty set out if you have gone and turned your poor luny nephew out o'doors."

"Pooh! nonsense! he was no more luny than you or myself. It was his natural depravity cropping out, that's what it was, and I'll have nothing more to do with him!" exclaimed old John, relapsing into a rage.

"Well you'll see. He *is* luny! If he hadn't o'been he'd

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never said nothing to hurt our feelings. He never did before!" sobbed the old woman.

"I'll disinherit him! and he shall never darken my doors again!" persisted the old man.

"And here endeth the first lesson!" sighed poor Joseph to himself as he took his dejected way toward his place of business. "I have scarcely begun to speak the truth for one hour before I am turned out of doors and disinherited—Ah! I beg your pardon, Miss Robinson!"

In the absorption of his mind he had run afoul of a stout woman, who came sailing along like a frigate under full canvass, with her expansive hoops, crinoline, and flounces filling up the whole breadth of the pavement.

"He! he! he! whatever could you have been thinking of, Mr. Morriss?" giggled the woman.

"Of my aunt and uncle, Miss Robinson," said Joseph, letting his eyes roll abstractedly over her showy person.

"Your haunt and huncle! la, what a dutiful nephew! But—he! he! he!—you are looking at my bonnet; now arn't you?"

"Yes."

"He! he! he! well, since you are so candid, how do you like it?"

"Very well in itself—not at all on you."

"Why so, sir, pray?"

"Because it doesn't suit you."

"And why not, I should like to know? Now tell me candidly, as I know you've got a deal of taste."

"Then, candidly, I think the bonnet too light for such a heavy woman, too young for such an old woman, and too fine for any waiting-woman."

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"Pray, how do you know anythink about my age, sir?" exclaimed the indignant Miss Robinson, reddening violently.

"By three sure tokens; the stoutness of your figure, the thinness of your hair, and the weakness of your eyes; these symptoms, taken all together, are infallible proofs of age."

"Mr. Morriss, you hinsult me, sir."

"Miss Robinson, I did not wish to do so; but you asked my opinion, and I gave it to you truthfully."

"You as much as said I was a stout, hold waiting-woman, sir, overdressed."

"Something like it, I admit."

"You are a hintolerable, himperent, hignorant fellow!" exclaimed the irate abigail, bouncing off.

"There, now," said Joseph to himself, "I've made another enemy by answering truthfully the questions that are put to me—an enemy of Helen Lyle's waiting-woman, too, whom I would not have offended for the world! For the world! humph! It is well I did not utter that aloud, for it was a fib. I *would* offend her for the world, though I wouldn't for a mere trifle. Oh, this habit of fibbing! When we don't fib to others, we fib to ourselves though there's no need of it. But confound this telling of the truth! It is likely to get me into more scrapes than I shall ever get out of. I wish people wouldn't make any inquiries of me, or address any observations to me for a whole week. We boys used to say when we didn't want to tell each other any thing unpleasant, 'Ax me no questions, and I'll tell you no lies.' I wish I had the right to say to all inquirers, 'Ask me no questions, and I'll tell you no truths!' Confound this truth-telling, I say again, though I need not say it, as

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the whole place is likely to be confusion worse confounded before I've done telling the truth."

The end of this soliloquy brought Joseph Morriss to the fine plate-glass fronted establishment of Messrs. Black, Brown, Green, and White, drapers and out-fitters.

Meanwhile Robinson, in a red rage, rushed on and bustled in upon every acquaintance she had among the tradespeople in Little Britain, asking—

"Hisn't there something very *hodd* about that impudent fellow, Morriss, him at Black's. I was hat the shop this morning to give an horder for Miss Lyle, and has I was coming hout I met 'im hin the street, where he behaved most improperly."

"La, Miss Robinson, and he such a modest-looking young man," said the milliner, who happened to be the first person addressed.

"Modest or not, 'e hinsulted me most grossly, and I believe 'e was very much hintoxicated."

"La! and he such a steady young man, and this so early in the morning."

"Then 'e was hevidently out of his 'ead!" exclaimed the abigail, reddening with anger.

"Good gracious me, Miss Robinson, how did he insult you? whatever did he say or do?"

"I leaves you to imagine, ma'am," replied the abigail, with a flaming face, flouncing out of the shop, for she had no idea of repeating Joseph's plain truths to her own disparagement.

And the pretty little milliner stood in perfect consternation at the implied fact that the handsome young salesman had had the shocking bad taste to make love to a big,

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flaunting, middle-aged waiting-woman, who confounded her H's."

"And goodness gracious me, he *must* have been out of his head, sure enough," she said, as she resumed her duties behind the counter.

This conversation was, with little variation, repeated at at least a dozen shops. And so, by the diligent rolling of the ball, in the course of two hours at least one-half of his acquaintances in Little Britain were sure that there was something wrong about that poor young fellow Morriss.

CHAPTER III.

EHEU JOSEPHUS!

MEANWHILE Joseph Morriss entered the fine front shop of his employers.

"Mr. Morriss," said the junior partner, advancing to meet him, "You are late; but I have no wish to find fault with one who is generally so punctual as yourself. Here, I wish you to see these choice brocades and moires carefully packed. They are to be sent down to Streatham to Miss Lyle for examination this evening. And I should be particularly obliged if you would go down yourself with the parcel. It is no part of your business, I know, but we don't like to trust so valuable a parcel to our new shop-boy. And besides, it would look like attention for you to go down; and she is one of our most profitable customers. Her woman

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was in here this morning, and gave an extensive order, and desired these silks to be sent down for her mistress to look at this evening. So if you have no objection I should be especially obliged to you to go with them."

"I will go with great pleasure, sir," answered Joseph, with a beaming countenance, delighted, perhaps, to be able to make an answer at once truthful and polite.

Poor boy! he had begun to fear that he was never to open his mouth without giving offence or making an enemy.

"That's like you, you are very obliging. And do you know, you good-looking young dog, that I think she would like you to go down to her villa: I have noticed that when she comes to the shop herself she always likes you to serve her; and if one of us old fogies of the firm go to wait on her to show our respect, she looks bored, and doesn't like any thing we show her, and gets up and says she will call again. Ah, you young scapegrace, it's a fine thing to be five-and-twenty, with nice auburn hair and whiskers!" said Mr. Brown, passing his hand over his own shining ivory pate.

Joseph Morriss reddened with the ingenuous blush of modest young manhood, as he answered truthfully—

"Yes, it is."

The partner looked up in mild surprise at this very candid reply, saying to himself—

"The conceited young puppy! Is he as vain as all that? Yet no, he cannot be, for he is blushing now at the imputation of being admired by an heiress? I must have misunderstood him. Then speaking up, he said—

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"And I have something else to tell you, Morriss, and, mind, it is a secret yet. Come this way."

The young man followed his principal to a covert behind some hanging shawls, and continued—

"You see, I wish to have the pleasure of telling you the first myself, and, as I am going down to Paisley to buy goods this morning, I shall not have another opportunity."

Joseph looked interested and curious. Mr. Brown glanced around to see that there were no eavesdroppers, and continued—

"Well, you see, on Saturday night, partners and myself were having a snug little supper together at the 'Angel and Gridiron'—rum name for a tavern, isn't it?"

"It is a queer combination of subjects," replied the young man.

"And not so queer neither, for I am sure, if my cook would always send me up such juicy, well-broiled steaks and chops as we get there, I should call her an angel *at* the gridiron! Ha, ha, ha! good, that, though I got it off myself—isn't it?"

"Not so very," answered the truth-teller.

"What does he mean?" asked Mr. Brown of himself; "I don't understand him this morning; he is certainly queer."

But being too much interested in the matter he had to communicate to fly off after any collateral subject, he passed it by, and continued—

"Well, as I was saying, we were all snugly seated at supper in a private room of the Angel and Gridiron, when we began to talk of you—of your intelligence and fidelity,

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and pleasiug manners, and popularity among the ladies, and—a—a—in short, we thought it would be the right thing to take you into the firm, and give you a fair share of the business."

"Oh, Mr. Brown!" burst forth the young man in a fervor of gratitude and delight.

To be made a member of the firm at some far distant day, after years of faithful service and careful saving, had been the goal of his loftiest earthly ambition; but to be taken in now, without capital, merely upon account of his personal worth, was rapture.

"Hush! don't break out in that way; you'll be overheard, and the affair is a dead secret as yet. There, the shop is half full of customers, and we must bring our conversation to an end. Yes, you see Black is going to retire altogether from business, and I shall be the senior partner."

"I wish you joy, sir."

"Yes, and congratulate yourself, too, for I think I shall make a kinder master than our rather tyrannical head, Black. But, at all events, after the first of May proximo, the firm will be styled, 'Brown, Green, White, and Morriss,' if you raise no objection."

"Oh, Mr. Brown, my heart——"

"Yes, I know—I know. Well, that's the secret. Now, you know the others wish to surprise you, therefore you are not to go and say that I told you."

"No, not unless they ask me."

"Oh, they are not going to do that; they will be mum until the time comes. And now I am off to Scotland; and

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you had better go and attend to those ladies looking at the prints."

So Mr. Brown departed, and the young man took his accustomed place behind the counter to wait upon the customers.

"You are sure, now, that these colors will not fade?" inquired a young lady, examining a neat cotton print.

"No, miss, I am sure they will fade," replied the truth-teller.

"But they are ticketed 'fast colors,' so how do you know they will fade?"

"Because an old lady bought a dress of them last week, and washed a piece, which faded quite out, and she came here on Saturday and made a noise about it."

"I should think she might; but you ought not to ticket prints 'fast colors,' unless you are quite sure that they are so."

"No, miss, I know we ought not."

"And now that you have found out they fade you should take the ticket off."

"Yes, miss, I know we should."

"What, are not those tickets taken off yet?" exclaimed the junior partner White, coming up in a great bustle. "Take them off at once, Mr. Morriss. We never warrant any colors but what we *know* to be fast. What else can we show you, miss?" he inquired, turning deferentially to the young lady.

"Nothing, thank you; I will call again," said the young lady, gently bowing herself out of the shop.

As soon as she was gone, the whole manner of the proprietor changed. Turning sharply round to Morriss, who

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was engaged in tearing off the "fast colors" tickets from the fady prints, he said, harshly—

"Let those tickets be, Morriss! What the deuce possessed you to tell Miss Simpson that the colors would fade?"

"Because it was true. Old Mrs. Rubb, who bought a dress of it last week, on the strength of those tickets, brought back a piece of it washed out to a browny white."

"But you needn't have told Miss Simpson that. You ought to have left her to find it out for herself after she had bought and paid for the dress."

"But that would have been too late, sir."

"What of that? We must sell our goods, I suppose? Whereas, if we go to let people know that this piece of goods will fade, and that will fray, and t'other cut out, we had better put up our shutters at once. I'm astonished that you should have been in our employ so long without knowing better than to act as you have done. Be careful not to make such mistakes in future," and so saying, Mr. White stalked off.

Poor Joseph, he had scarcely drawn his breath after this blowing up, before his truth and courage were put to a fresh trial.

"Show me some good cheap flannels, like them marked up at the window—'Real Welsh, all wool, elevenpence three farthings a yard,'" said an old lady, coming up to the counter.

With a sigh at the prospective cross-examination, and a hearty hope that the old lady might take every thing for

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granted, and ask no questions, Joseph took down a roll of flannel, and displayed it before her.

"Now is this just the same as that in the window?"

"It is just the same sort of goods."

"And is it real Welsh?"

"N—n—o, mum; it is not."

"Isn't it?—but it is marked so in the window! How-s'ever it feels like a good bit of flannel; and it's all wool?"

"No, mum; it is slightly mixed with cotton."

"Mixed with cotton! Why it's marked 'All Wool' in the window! what makes you put things in the window that ain't true? Hows'ever, it *do* feel like a good bit of flannel, for all that, and cheap enough at the price, if it do not shrink badly. Will it, do you think?"

"Yes, mum, very badly."

"La! how do you know?"

"Because my aunt bought some to make up for herself, and it shrank so badly that she said it was fit for nothing but scouring-cloths."

"La! well, it was very honest in you to tell me so, else I should ha' been taken in," said the old lady, rising to depart.

"I can show you some genuine Welch flannel, really all wool, and warrant not to shrink much, at a higher price, mum," said the young man, trying to stop her progress.

"No, I thank you; I think I'll go over the way," replied the old lady, evidently afraid of being "taken in."

The face of Mr. Black, who overheard this conversation, was crimson with anger. Hastening after the departing customer, he exclaimed—

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"It was all a mistake, mum, about those flannels; the tickets were put upon the wrong goods, I assure you. I ordered my young men to rectify the error immediately, but I suppose they neglected it; it shall, however, be done instantly. In the meantime, if you will step back, we can show you——"

"Oh, no, I thank you," hastily exclaimed the old lady, hurrying out of the shop.

"There! now you've done it again," muttered Mr. Black, in a low, enraged voice, close to the ear of Joseph. Have you taken leave of your senses this morning? Why should you tell that lady that the flannel wasn't Welsh, wasn't all wool, and would shrink badly?"

Because she asked me, and I had to answer her the truth."

"Truth be——!" exclaimed the proprietor, in a voice of suppressed fury. But at this moment a party of ladies advanced toward Joseph, and his principal retreated to recover his composure.

"Now, are those *real* French silks?" inquired one of the ladies, examining what was trying to pass muster for glacé.

"N—n—o, madam," faltered Joseph, blushing up to his eyes.

"But they are labelled genuine French silks, though I had my doubts about it, too; but why do you label them thus, if they are not so? But it is a mistake, I suppose?" said the lady interrogatively.

"No, madam, it was not."

"What! you don't mean to say that it was done on purpose?"

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"Yes, madam."

"Why do you put false labels on your goods?"

"To sell them at a better price, madam."

"But that is cheating!" cried the lady, in a shocked voice.

"I know it, madam," the truth-teller was forced to admit.

"And is this the practice of your shop?"

"Yes, madam, and of many other shops."

"Shocking! And—but why do you expose these things? Have you quarrelled with your employers?"

"No, madam! I never was in higher account with them than at present."

"Extraordinary! But why, then, do you dare tell me these things?"

"Because you ask me questions, madam, which I feel compelled to answer truthfully."

"Wonderful! And do you always tell the truth?"

"I do now, madam."

"And do your employers know of it?"

"I think not, madam."

"I should think not, indeed!"

"But now about these silks falsely labelled French. I should like to know what they really are?"

"English silks, of rather inferior quality."

"And what is their real worth in retail?"

"About two shillings a yard."

"And you sell them for three shillings! a third more than their value! Monstrous! I never will enter this shop, and I shall certainly let all my friends know how

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they are taken in," said the lady, dropping the silks, and departing.

This scene was witnessed not only by the panic-stricken Black, but by White and Green, who stood in consternation for a minute after the lady had left the shop; and then all three made a simultaneous rush upon Joseph, exclaiming in a breath—

"What the d—— do you mean, sir?'

"Are you mad? Do you wish to ruin us?'

"You are driving away every customer out of the shop. You are costing us a hundred pounds an hour, if a penny."

"Why the d—— do you act in this insane manner?"

"I am asked questions, and I tell the truth," answered Joseph, driven to desperation by this storm of invective.

"Truth! What the d—— do you mean by that? you say our labels are false!"

"You say we put false tickets on our goods, to sell them at a better price!" said Green.

"And that it is the practice of our establishment!" said White.

"Well, it is the truth! the truth! the truth! and I must speak the truth, if I die for it!" cried Joseph wildly.

"Get out of our shop, you villain!" roared Black.

"Begone, you scoundrel!" thundered Green.

"Never show your face inside of our doors again!" shouted White.

"Go!" stormed all three.

The time had come. Joseph took his hat, leaped lightly

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over the counter, and stopping only to snatch the parcel consigned to his care by Brown, vanished from the shop.

"Well," thought Joseph Morriss, as he found himself in the street, with the parcel under his arm, "I have spoken the truth for six hours only, and without any other fault than that, I find myself disinherited and turned out of doors by my uncle, and disgraced and driven from the shop of my employers! Will the rest follow? Will sweet Lizzy Bell discard me for telling her some unpleasant truth? And will terrified and indignant society send me to Bedlam as a madman too dangerous to be at large?"

CHAPTER IV.

"It's gude to be merry and wise,
It's gude to be honest and true,
It's gude to be off wi' the auld love
Before ye be on wi' the new."

"I HAD better made a compact with the Evil One—so much temporal prosperity for so much eternal perdition—than this agreement with Blewitt to speak the truth for a week! Now, where shall I bend my steps? Turned out of my uncle's house, and driven from my employer's shop, what shall I do? The sooner I finish it all up and get into Bedlam the better. There, at least, I shall have board, lodging and attendance. There I shall not be kicked out for telling the truth; quite the contrary, for the more truth I speak, the longer they will keep me, for the madder they

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will think me. Bedlam for my money!—and Bedlam for ever! But in the meantime, what the deuce am I to do?" thought Joseph Morriss, as he stood looking up and down the street.

"Give a poor man a penny, sir," suggested a miserable looking tramp at his elbow.

"No; don't see it; I'm a poor man myself," said Joseph.

"Out of work, sir."

"Serves you right; so am I."

"It was not my fault, sir."

"I'm another; 'twasn't mine."

"Wife and fifteen small children, sir; mostly twins, 'specially the three last, sir."

"Then you possess more than I do, so how dare you beg from me? Be off with yourself."

"Please, sir, all down with the measles."

"Then I shouldn't like to catch it; get away," said Joseph, who, having refused the beggar a penny, tossed him a crown, and then made the best of his own way to the Angel and Gridiron, to find "his warmest welcome at an inn." He engaged a room, where he deposited his parcel to remain until the evening, and went to call upon his betrothed.

Lizzy Bell was the niece of a thriving milliner in the next street, and the heiress presumptive of the shop, the business and the savings. She was a little fair-skinned, rosy-cheeked, blue-eyed, yellow-haired lump of a girl, always dressed out as an advertisement to the shop. Her business was to sit in the show-rooms, exhibit fashions, and wheedle customers until her aunt should be at leisure to

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receive orders. She had a fair knowledge of trade, and a sharp eye to the main chance. Otherwise, her intellect was shallow, and her education superficial.

She had been engaged for about a year to Joseph Morriss, who, as head clerk of Black, Brown, Green, and White, and heir of old John Morriss, was considered quite a catch for girls of her class. So Miss Lizzy Bell had angled for him, and caught him; and Mr. Joseph Morriss, being good-natured and obliging, had easily suffered himself to be taken. The scene of the said man-fishing had been the shop of Messrs. B., B., G., and W., where Miss Lizzy was in the habit of going to purchase goods. And now they were betrothed, and the marriage was fixed to come off on the first of the ensuing month.

Joseph was so very fond of her that he quite mistook her personal appearance for her very self, and supposed her soft, round, white form, and blue eyes to indicate an affectionate disposition, her dullness to be good temper, and her lumpish immobility to prove constancy and domesticity. He had not even begun to suspect that all this in her meant simply indolence, selfishness, and sensuality. He was now on his way to confide to her "tender and faithful bosom" his own great troubles.

She received him as usual in the little front drawing-room over the shop, and adjoining the show-room, where she daily sat among lace curtains, tidies, and other gossamer draperies, like a pretty little spider in an elegant little web, to exhibit enticing fineries and entangle feminine flies.

She was dressed in a redundancy of pink flounces, that made her resemble a large cabbage-rose in full bloom. She

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was seated near the centre table, and engaged in copying a Parisian pattern bonnet that hung upon a little pole before her.

There was no one else in the room when Joseph entered.

"So you have come at last," she said, without rising to receive him.

"Yes," he replied, wearily sinking into a chair.

"I hope you had a pleasant visit with your friend, Miss Robinson, last evening."

"I was at chapel," replied Joseph, looking up in surprise. "I was anxious to hear Mr. Sturm——"

"Oh, yes; and to wait on Miss Robinson. I believe it is mostly shop-boys and servant-girls that go to hear that ranter."

"I do not clearly understand you, Lizzy. Mr. Sturm is no ranter, and his hearers are composed of all classes, from the nobility and gentry down to the news-boys and street-sweepers."

"To say nothing of Miss Robinson."

"Why do you reiterate a waiting-woman's name to me in this manner, Lizzy? You seem to be angry with me without a cause. What is the matter?"

"Ah, *I* know of your carryings on; you need not think I don't! *I* hear of you!"

"Lizzy, you meet me with undeserved reproaches this morning, when I am in peculiar need of comfort——"

"Oh! I suppose you are! I suppose you have offended Miss Robinson, have you not, now?"

"Yes."

"There, I knew it! Well, you needn't come to me for

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comfort: you better go and make it up with your lady's waiting-woman."

"Lizzy, you insult me!" exclaimed the young man, in such an angry tone, and with such a crimson brow, that the flippant girl became alarmed. She had not credited one word of the story hinted to her by Jane Robinson, though she had acted upon it to gratify her love of giving pain. So now, holding out her hand to him, she said—

"Well, if you haven't been paying attention to a lady's-maid, I had a good right to think you had. The woman was in here this morning in a towering passion, and said you had been making love to her!"

"Said that I had been——"

"Well, if she didn't say it, she hinted it."

"What did she say?"

Lizzy told him.

"And now I will relate what really did pass," said Joseph, and thereupon he described the scene between himself and Robinson.

Lizzy laughed heartily. She was malicious enough keenly to enjoy the discomfiture of the abigail. When her fit of laughter was over, she wiped the tears from her eyes, looked up, and inquired—

"But what possessed you to tell her that?"

"Because she asked me, and I had to answer truly,"

"But my good gracious alive, the truth is not to be told at all times; 'tisn't prudent. Now, you've made a mortal enemy of Miss Lyle's confidential attendant, and she'll go and persuade her mistress not to deal at your shop—or mine either, perhaps."

"I think it quite likely, indeed, Lizzie. And that is not

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the only scrape I have got into this morning either," sighed the young man."

"That is quite enough; but what else?"

Joseph related the breakfast scene between himself and his relatives that ended in his expulsion from their house.

"And so, dear Lizzy," he concluded, "because in answer to an observation that was made to me, I admitted that I should not be quite inconsolable if my aunt and uncle were to die, and that the legacy I expected from him would help to comfort me for their loss, he has turned me out of doors, and disinherited me!"

Lizzie did not laugh now. She was quite sensible of the pecuniary damage she herself, as Joseph's wife, might sustain in the loss of that inheritance. Her face flushed deeply with displeasure at this loss; but she took up the tone of virtuous indignation, as she answered—

"And served you right, too! for indeed I must say it was very undutiful, and cruel, and unnatural in you, to say such things to your uncle and aunt—and such a rich uncle, too! and you his only nephew! I don't know what could have possessed you. Why did you say them?"

"Because I was asked questions, and had to answer truly, as I told you before."

"And as *I* told *you* before, the truth is not to be spoken at all times; and in this case it was downright *wicked* to speak the truth—to such a wealthy relative, too! Why, when my aunt says to me—'La! Lizzy, my dear, whatever would you do if you were to lose me?" I don't answer her—'A great deal better without you, aunt; for then I should have every thing all to myself,' although that would

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be the truth, because, if I did, she would turn me out of doors, and serve *me* right! No; I answer—'La, aunt! don't talk so: you break my heart. If you were to die, I should cry my eyes out, and pine myself into the grave in a month.'"

"And does she believe you?"

"She believes that at least I think so, and that I am sincere in what I say; and so she loves me all the more, and saves all the closer for me."

"Lizzy, you revolt me! I could not have believed that there was so much insensibility and insincerity in your nature," said the young man, in a mournful voice.

"It is not insincerity—it is prudence, and good nature, and dutifulness to parents—I mean to aunts. And bad as I am, Mr. Virtuous Indignation, I'm not so bad as to hurt the feelings of them that brought me up, and cared for me, as somebody else did," sneered Lizzy.

"I had best tell you the extent of the mischief at once, Lizzy, for the rupture with my uncle is not the only misfortune that has overtaken me this day," said the young man desperately.

"Well, what is the other? You'd as well tell me; I am ready to hear any thing now."

Joseph related to her the events of the morning at his place of business. He ended by saying—

"And so, Lizzy, by merely answering truthfully such questions as have been put to me, I have been driven forth from my employers' office."

"And serves you doubly right! I think you must have been out of your senses!" exclaimed Lizzy, flushing deeply at this double folly, as she would have termed it, at this

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double ruin, as she felt it to be. "It's enough to ruin your employers' business. I'm sure *I*, for one, shouldn't blame them if they were to sue you for slander! *Now* what are you to do?"

"God knows! I do not."

"I know one thing! If you had had the slightest regard for *me*, you would not have acted in such a manner as to bring yourself to beggary within one month of our maraiage!"

"Do you blame me for telling the truth?"

"Oh, the truth!" exclaimed Lizzy, in extreme disgust. "Yes, I do blame you! It was sheer madness to tell the truth to your customers. I don't think they have a right to expect it. If I were to tell the truth to our customers, we might go into the Insolvent Court to-morrow. Truth, indeed! I shall sell this bonnet that I am making for double its cost, by swearing it is a Parisian bonnet; well, it is just as good, being made after one. If you want to do business, and get along in this world, you must *shave*. I'm no barber, but I can shave a caution, I tell you!"

"More is the pity,"said Joseph, sadly.

"And as for *you*, Mr. Truth-teller, I really do wonder at your sudden conscientiousness. You have told *me* falsehoods enough in your time, Heaven knows!"

"Me! I told you falsehoods!" was upon the tip of Joseph's tongue; but suddenly he remembered that often, in the heat of his affection for Lizzy, he had used terms of endearment and admiration that were not warranted by fact. He had, during those fits of temporary insanity, called her his "angel," his "life," his "soul," whereas she was not, and could not be any of these things, but only a pretty little dumpling of a

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girl, of whom, however, he was very fond. So the truth-teller was obliged to reply—

"Yes, Lizzy, I have told you falsehoods; but I will do so no more."

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Lizzy, indignantly. "I suppose, when you said you loved me, you told a falsehood? Well, I declare!"

"No, Lizzy, that was the truth! I *do* love you."

"Oh, you *do*. I should be very thankful for small favors! What do you mean, then, by saying that you have told me falsehoods?"

"I have called you the sweetest darling in the world; and that was false, for you are not such."

"Well, upon my word! Any thing else?"

"Yes; I have called you an angel, which of course was not true."

"Humph! What else?"

"A beauty, a seraph, and my life, and my soul; neither of which you are, dear Lizzy!"

"And you told me that you should die if I didn't marry you; and I suppose *that* was as false as the rest?"

"Yes, Lizzy, it was."

"Well, now, after that last speech, I hope you will take your hat and go!"

"No, dear Lizzy, I shall not. And now you must be content to hear the honest truth. Although you are no angel, nor beauty, you are a very good looking young girl. And though my life actually does not depend upon your constancy, and though your final rejection of me would not quite kill me, still I do love you very dearly, and should feel very sorry if any thing were to happen to part us. I mean to be true to

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you in word and deed, both as a lover and as a husband," said Joseph, seriously.

"Well, really I *ought* to feel flattered! You are very sincere now, at least," sneered the girl.

"I was always so sincere as this—that I never meant to deceive you. Those hyperbolical terms of admiration and endearment, though not literally true, were at their worst only the fond exaggerations of a sincere lover," said Joseph, deprecatingly.

"You never were in love with me, or you are not so now, else you would not think terms hyper—what's its name—which I suppose means too good for me. No, Mr. Morriss, it is somebody else you love, not me."

Morriss was silent, because he was turning over in his mind a subject that he did not clearly understand—namely, the state of his own heart;—then he replied, truthfully—

"No, Lizzy, there is no one in the world I love as much as yourself."

"You say that very slowly and doubtfully; and I see very well how it is. There is some one you admire more than you do me, and whom you could love better than you love me, if you were free to do so. Now, isn't that the truth?"

The blood rushed to Joseph's face in a crimson flush, and then retreating, left it pale as marble, as in a low, unsteady voice, he replied—

"Lizzy, if you had asked me this question but yesterday, I should have answered 'No,' telling you a pleasant, conventional falsehood; but to-day I speak the stern truth, and answer 'Yes.'"

"Then why don't you take your hat and go, as I told

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you before?" exclaimed the girl, flushed with what we are forced to admit was a very natural indignation.

"Because, Lizzy, I must first reason with you, and then, perhaps, you will understand me better, and not wish me to go. Listen to me, dear Lizzy, for you *are* dear to me; if you were not, I would not call you so! We human creatures are many of us aspiring beings, Lizzy, and apt to look up to that which is excellent, and sigh for that which is unattainable. Lizzy, from boyhood to manhood, I have watched a lovely little girl grow up into a lovely woman; she is beautiful, without vanity; wise, without pedantry; wealthy, without pride; a perfect woman, Lizzy, if ever one lived in this world——"

"Then you had better go and tell her so, and not stand here insulting me with her praises."

"Bear with me, Lizzy! You asked for the truth, and I am giving it to you. This noble woman is not for me; her brow is destined for a coronet, perhaps! I never lowered her by so familiar a thought as that of making her my wife; and therefore, I never dared to love her——"

"I won't stand this any longer! Why, to think that the very proposal of marriage that I know you considered quite a compliment, you look upon as a wrong and a degradation if offered to her! No, I won't stand it! Here! take back your keeper, and leave the house, sir!" exclaimed the girl, passionately, tearing off her ring and dashing it upon the floor.

"But hear me, Lizzy, and if you understand me, you will see that you have no reasonable cause for jealousy. This noble woman, whom I never, even in imagination, connected with love or marriage, has been to me a guiding star, and has even made me more worthy to become your husband—"

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"I don't see it; and I don't thank her!"

"I will explain and you *may* thank her! She was an early school-fellow and playmate of mine, and now, notwithstanding her great change of fortune, I believe she takes a friendly interest in my welfare. Therefore, Lizzy, in many an hour of temptation and danger, the thought of her—the thought that she would hear of my weakness and folly—has saved from sin and misery. There, Lizzy! that is what that woman has done for me, no more, and no less! Take back your ring, dear Lizzy, and believe that I will be true to you as long as you accept my fidelity," said Joseph, picking up the keeper and attempting to replace it upon her finger.

But she sharply slapped his hand off, and threw the ring out of the window; saying—

"No; I won't take any *half* heart, or any second-handed heart either! You may go to your paragon. *I* will never have any thing to say to you again. I never *did* think you were worth much, and now I know that you are worth nothing! And worthless as you are in every thing else, you are not even faithful to me! I never did really love you, and now I hate and despise you. So now I hope you'll go before I call a policeman to put you out!"

This was spoken very passionately, but there was a deep viciousness in Lizzy's looks, as well as a fierce acrimony in her words that left no saving doubt on Joseph's mind as to her real meaning or her true character. The latter was a revelation to him. He rose with dignity, and said—

"Good-bye, Lizzy! you are not the Lizzy I supposed you to be! I have been as much deceived in you as you profess to have been in me! Thank Heaven, the mistake has been discovered in good time. And thank you, Lizzy,

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for my restored freedom. Yes; it is a bitter lesson, but a wholesome one;" and dashing a few indignant tears from his eyes, the young man turned and left the house.

'There! thank fortune, I have got rid of *him*. Why, now that he is cast off by his uncle, and turned out by his employer, he hasn't even the means of getting his own living! If I were to marry him *now*, I should have to support him! Let him put up with it! and he admiring another woman more than he does me! And I wonder who she is? However, I don't mind. I shall take care to let Mr. Henry Blewitt know that the coast is clear now, for he is no end to the better match of the two!" soliloquised Miss Lizzy, as she seated herself to trim the Parisian bonnet.

Meantime Joseph, brooding over the selfishness, hardness, and duplicity of Lizzy's character, as it had just been revealed to him, wandered thoughtfully away from the milliner's shop. In his deep abstraction he ran plump up against a gentleman advancing from the other end of the street.

"Hey! what the deuce! Joseph! are you really as mad as they say you are, and are you 'running a muck' against all Little Britain?"

"Oh, Blewitt! is that you? I beg your pardon!"

"I should think you might, after knocking the soul out of my body! how do you get on?"

"Get *on!* I am getting *off*, it appears. Ah, Blewitt! I have not yet told the truth for seven hours, and I am off with my uncle, off with my employers, and off with my sweetheart."

"I told you so! and now if you do not look out sharp, in seven more hours you will be *off* to the lunatic asylum. Your good aunt has been down to your place inquiring

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after you. The story they told her at Black's you may be certain did not reassure her. She is herself convinced, and has convinced them, that you are entirely out of your head, as she calls it. They are now thoroughly persuaded that your strange conduct this morning was the effect of serious mental derangement. They are all very anxious lest you should do yourself a mischief!"

"And really, I think their anxiety in the last respect well founded! I suppose, in the last seven hours, I have done myself as much mischief as a man possibly could do himself, by simply speaking the truth!" said Joseph dejectedly.

"Shouldn't wonder, my dear fellow. Still the play must be played out. In the meantime, what will you do? All Little Britain is in a stir with the news that you have suddenly gone mad. They are searching for you in every direction to put you under restraint and subject you to a medical examination. Now, as you are bound not to give any explanation of your conduct until the end of the week, you must either get out of the way or into Bedlam."

"I shall take my chance," said Joseph, in desperation; "but as I have business down at Streatham, I shall go and attend to that first."

"Then you'd better be off at once, my fine fellow; so I will not detain you. *Au revoir!*" said Blewitt, gaily lifting his hat, and waiving it as they separated.

Joseph Morriss returned to the Angel and Gridiron, refreshed himself with a chop and a glass of ale, took up his parcel, threw himself into a Streatham omnibus, and started for the Rosery, the beautiful suburban villa of Helen Lyle, the wealthy heiress.

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"And now, Helen!—gentle-hearted, noble-minded, pure-spirited Helen—will you, too, discard your old schoolfellow for speaking the truth? Shall you ask me trying questions?—must I answer with offensive truths?—and will you expel me with ignominy from your gates? Heaven forbid," thought Joseph, as the omnibus rattled along toward Streatham.

In due time he was set down at the head of a shady lane, whence a short walk took him to the lovely little wooded vale in which was situated the Rosery.

CHAPTER V.

"Ever the right comes uppermost,
And ever is justice done."

Helen Lyle, the wealthy proprietress of the Rosery, was the only daughter of the old schoolmaster from whom Joseph Morriss had received the "rudiments" of his education. As Dominie Lyle's elementary school had been composed of both boys and girls of a tender age, Helen and Joseph had been schoolmates and classmates from the time that they were mere infants until the year in which Joseph was received as shop-boy in Black, Brown, White and Green's establishment, and Helen was promoted to the assistant teacher's desk in her father's school. And after that they were companions and friends, until one quiet autumn afternoon, when the gentle-spirited old master laid down the ferule that he seldom used, dropped his head softly

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upon his desk, and sank into his last long sleep. After the schoolmaster's death, Helen went out as a daily governess to win her daily bread. And at this thankless task she toiled year after year, until one bitter, bitter winter day, when she returned from her round of duties, chilled, weary, hungry, and faint, to her humble lodgings, she found there a grim-visaged lawyer, with a green bag, anxiously waiting her appearance. Helen's great-uncle, her grandfather's elder brother, had died in New Orleans, and left her half a million of pounds sterling, made in the cotton trade.

And Helen Lyle, the poor, over-worked, ill-paid, daily governess, was, in point of wealth, a match for a duke—in point of worth, she was matchless.

Helen was now twenty-two years of age, so that there were no tedious days of minority and guardianship to be lingered out. She entered at once upon her splendid fortune, which she enjoyed with the meekness of a gentle spirit, long disciplined by adversity. Love of the country tempted her to leave London, while attachment to her old friends and neighbors withheld her from going far away; so she purchased a villa at Streatham, and invited a needy relative, the wife of a country curate, to live with her.

Helen furnished her house with elegant simplicity, and adopted a style of living many degrees below that to which her real wealth entitled her. This was done in consideration of those old and humble friends and neighbors, to whom she was tenderly attached, whom she constantly invited and entertained at her villa, and whom she did not wish to repel by a show of great disparity in their mutual way of living. The surplus income saved in this manner was devoted to the purposes of charity.

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It was quite in vain that ladies of the upper classes who had younger sons to dispose of, or younger brothers to provide for, condescended to "take up" this wealthy city heiress, and endeavored to patronise this *parvenu*. Helen had too much gentle dignity of character to have accepted the mere patronage of a royal duchess. She was perfectly inaccessible, except through her affections or her conscience.

Helen had been in possession of her fortune three years, and was consequently now twenty-five years of age. Her figure was tall, slender, and elegantly turned. Her pale oval face was shaded with dark-brown hair, and lighted up by large brown eyes. Her youth of toil and privation had given to her beautiful features and graceful manners an expression of gravity beyond her years.

On this particular afternoon Helen was in the drawing-room alone, when a servant entered, and in a low tone informed her that Mr. Morriss had come with a parcel from Black's.

"Show Mr. Morriss in here, and take the parcel to Robinson," said Helen.

The servant went out, and in the next moment Mr. Morriss was announced.

Helen arose and crossed the whole width of the room to receive him, holding out her hand and saying, with a smile—

"Well! I have been living here three years, and this is the first time you have been to see me. Was that kind of an old friend?"

"Under the circumstances, I think it was, Miss Lyle?" answered the truth-teller.

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"But why?" inquired Helen, as she led the way to a sofa, and invited him to be seated.

"The disparity of our conditions, Miss Lyle, would seem to forbid the continuance of our acquaintance."

"Again, why? I do not see the reason."

"I should be considered an intruder and an alien, Miss Lyle, in the sphere upon which you have entered."

"By whom? not by me," said Helen.

"By the people with whom you are surrounded, Miss Lyle, who might not like to meet in your drawing-room the salesman who waits upon them behind the counter."

"Then they need not do it. They can stay away. I myself am of the city; the money that I have inherited was made in trade; my affections and sympathies are with the people from whom I sprang, and among whom I was brought up. I do not seek acquaintances among the gentry; but if they will seek me, I shall treat them with courtesy; but I shall also expect them to treat with like courtesy the friends of my childhood whom they may meet at my house."

"Miss Lyle, that is nobly said, and like yourself; but I fear it is an impracticable theory. I fear the exigencies of your new position will compel you to drop your old friends."

"Never!" she said. "But why do you call me Miss Lyle? In those old, happy days at my grandfather's little school, it used to be Helen and Joseph. In the after days of trouble, it was still Joseph and Helen! Why should it now be Miss Lyle? Do you wish me to call you Mr. Morriss?"

"No, no! pray do not! Call me Joseph, I entreat

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you!" exclaimed the young man, as her color went and came.

"Then let me be Helen, as of old!—your friend Helen. Yes, Joseph, we must be friends! I have neither parents, brother, nor sister in the world, and I—shall never marry. So you and your wife, Joseph, must be like brother and sister to me. I hear that you are soon to be married, and I am glad that you came here this evening, as I have prepared a present for your young bride——"

The Marchioness of Montlyon and Lord George Dewbills were announced, and the two visitors entered the room.

Joseph took his hat to withdraw.

"No, don't go yet, I entreat you! This is the first time you have been here. I have seen so little of you, and —I have so much to say to you; pray wait till they are gone," whispered Helen, hastily.

Joseph bowed, and with a throbbing heart, retreated to the other end of the room, and tried to employ himself by looking at some fine stereoscopic views.

The marchioness met Helen with much *empressement*, taking her by both hands, and kissing her with every appearance of affectionate interest.

And to Joseph's astonishment—for he could not entirely confine his attention to the stereoscope, or quite avoid observing this interview—Helen seemed pleased and flattered by the condescension.

Lord George was equally attentive to the young lady of the house. They talked of the London season, then at its height; of the Queen's last drawing-room, of balls, concerts, operas recent and approaching, and wondered why Mrs. Cassock and Miss Lyle did not come up to town.

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The marchioness then left cards for her morning concert at Montlyon House, and soon after, with the same demonstrations of affection, took her leave.

"And now," said Helen, advancing and joining Joseph, "what do you think of *that?*"

"I think," replied the young man, "that the Marchioness of Montlyon must have some *very* important object in view when she condescends to come here and be so *very* gracious to you, Helen."

"That opinion is not very flattering to me at any rate," said the lady. "But how do you know that it was not my personal worth that attracted her?"

"Because, Helen, your personal worth, if it had been ten times as great, would not have attracted her ladyship had you remained a daily governess. And you know that quite as well as I do. And even now, greatly as your fortunes are changed for the better, there must be some very important object that brings Lady Montlyon to your house. Marchionesses do not often 'take up' city heiresses, no matter how wealthy the latter may be."

"You are painfully candid! But what object do you suppose her ladyship has in view?"

"Your half million of pounds sterling, to pay the debts of her profligate second son, Lord George Dewbills, whom upon account of his very bad character, even *her* influence has failed to get either into the army, navy, or church. Her ladyship thinks that a city heiress would be glad to endow a broken-down younger son with her large fortune for the sake of being *her* daughter-in-law, and of being called Lady George Dewbills, although the title is one of mere courtesy——"

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"But I should be only one remove from the coronet, which would be mine in case the elder brother should go off! How do you think I should adorn it?"

"Not at all, Helen."

"Why?"

"Because you are not, as they say, 'to the manner born' —you have not—what shall I say?—the—the air, the expression, the—what shall I say?—the indefinable something, the—so to speak—subtle aroma of high birth around you; that of the daily governess pervades you!"

"Well, really, Mr. Morriss, I do not know whether that last speech of yours is more remarkable for its politeness or its perspicuity!" said the astonished girl.

"I know it was not polite! Ah, Helen, the truth seldom is! And I am sure it was not clear, for I tried to define what was really indefinable; but you know what I mean."

"Yes; and if this is true, I wonder you should think that the marchioness could tolerate me as a daughter-in-law."

"Nor would she for her elder son; but for her profligate, penniless, and deeply-embarrassed younger one, she thinks that your splendid fortune would make a comfortable provision."

"Still she would be obliged to have me in her set."

"Not she! You would be only the wife of her younger son. When the family should be in town during the season, you would be stowed away at some remote country house, while Lord George could live at his club. When the family should be in the country, indeed you might be invited to dinner with the parson and the doctor!"

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"This is almost insulting! Why do you say these things to me, Joseph Morriss?" exclaimed the girl, flushing deeply.

"In the first place, because I feel them to be true! In the second place, to save you, if possible, from a false and fatal step!".

"Do you think I am in danger of taking it?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Because your manner to the marchioness and her disreputable son was——"

"Well, what? what was my manner?"

"Not what I expected from Helen Lyle!"

"But you have told me what it was not!—tell me what it was!"

"Toadying!"

"Well! Upon—my—word—and—HONOR!" exclaimed Helen, with her large brown eyes dilating and sparkling with indignation, as she started up and paced up and down the room.

He followed her with his eyes. Her bosom was heaving, her face flushed, her eyes still scintillating light. His very heart sank like lead in his bosom. His face grew deadly pale and his hands icy cold—he felt as if he could have died on the spot; he would rather have offended the whole world than Helen Lyle.

Suddenly she came up and stood panting with passion before him, saying—

"Toadying! You said toadying!"

"Yes, I said toadying! and I cannot take back the word, because it expresses just what I mean, Helen, and

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I can think of no civiller one to use in its place. You asked me for the truth, Helen, and I gave it you! I can do no otherwise; God help me!" cried the young man, in a voice of anguish, using quite unconsciously the very words that Martin Luther used in the hour of his greatest extremity.

Helen rushed away from him, and walked heatedly up and down the floor.

"I feel that I have mortally offended you, Miss Lyle, and that I must depart," said the young man, taking his hat, and bowing lowly, as he passed her.

CHAPTER VI.

NIL DESPERANDUM.

"No! STAY!" exclaimed Helen Lyle, in a tone so emphatic, and with a gesture so commanding, as suddenly to arrest the steps of Joseph Morriss, who stood like a statue where she stopped him.

She was still very much agitated; her bosom was heaving and setting; her cheeks flushing and paling; her eyes flashing and mouldering with the passion she could not entirely subdue.

"It is very bitter—very hard to swallow, but it is the—truth!" she cried, with an effort that seemed to choke her, as she sank down into a corner of the sofa and bowed her head upon her hand for a few moments. Then looking up,

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and seeing him still standing, she beckoned him to take the chair at her right hand, saying—

"Sit down, Joseph Morriss. I have no right to be offended with your straightforward honesty; nor must you think of leaving my house for such a cause. For the just rebuke you have given me, Joseph, I esteem and honor you the more."

"Helen! oh, if you did but know the exquisite pain it caused me to tell you that truth, you would almost forgive me!" said the young man, in a broken voice, as he stood humbly before her.

"I know! I know! and I do not forgive but *thank* you! I witnessed the great effort that it cost you to speak that humiliating truth, and I feel that it was all the more noble in you to do so. Great Heaven! what a thing the truth is! It shook you like a storm to utter it! it convulsed my whole nature to receive it! The passage of electricity from one tempest-cloud to another was nothing to it! But sit down; sit down; and promise me now that henceforth you will always do as you have done to-day;—always tell me the truth of myself, however bitter, humiliating, or wounding to my self-love it may be."

"Yes, Helen, I promise you."

"Notwithstanding that I may fly into a passion with my Mentor, as I have done this afternoon."

"Notwithstanding even that."

"Ah, Joseph, you were right in another thing you said to me! I have not the everlasting self-possession that marks the highest breeding. I have proved that by entirely losing my temper this afternoon. No, I have the passions of my class, and I

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"'Have not the repose
That stamps the caste of Vere de Vere,'"

said Helen, smiling.

"And yet, dear Helen, I doubt whether the most statuesque of all ossified peeresses could have borne what you have this afternoon without some disturbance of their stolidity. And you, Helen, could not have been blamed if you had ordered me from your presence that instant; the act would have been natural and proper."

"I could not have done that, for your words, though they wounded me to the quick, were those of truth—truth painfully but nobly spoken!" said Helen, with a vivid blush. "Yet do not think of me worse than I deserve! If I was betrayed to-day into 'toadying' this marchioness, believe me, such is not my habit!"

"That such is not consistent with your character I know, Helen; and therefore, that such is not your habit, I believe."

"You are but just to me in saying this. I do not, indeed, court the upper classes with whom I am sometimes brought to associate. But this Lady M——, with her overpowering affectionateness, seems to bewilder me and compel from me an excess of courtesy in return that must indeed seem to an honest observer very like 'toadying.' But it is the influence of this lady's presence over me, Joseph. Nothing more serious I assure you."

"I understand it all now, Helen; and yet I *do* wonder that *you* should have been so carried away. But then I knew that Lady M—— is said to be the most attractive and fascinating woman to women, as well as to men, in all London.

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"Yet do not think, Joseph, that, with all her enchantments, she could bewitch me into marrying Lord George."

"I should hope not, indeed."

"And as for the lady, I shall break her spell by breaking off the acquaintance."

"You will do well, Helen."

"And now let us return to the subject that was interrupted by the visit of the marchioness," said Miss Lyle, drawing toward her a small sofa-table, upon which stood a casket of jewels, which she opened and displayed, saying—

"Here, Joseph, here are some fine pearls which I have selected for your bride; they will well become her childlike beauty. You will offer them to her in my name, and ask her to accept, with them, the best wishes of her bridegroom's oldest friend."

Helen's voice faltered a little at the close of this speech as she gently pushed the casket toward Joseph Morriss. He was dumb with astonishment for a moment, ere he could recover his self-possession, and answer—

"Thank you, dearest Helen, for this generous thought; but, thank Heaven, I have no bride!"

"No bride! Why, whatever do you mean? I thought —I was—was—positively assured that you were upon the eve of marriage with Elizabeth Bell," exclaimed Helen, in a trembling voice, and with a rapidly changing color.

"Such an engagement did exist, but it has been broken off by mutual consent," said the young man, gravely.

Helen was too deeply disturbed to reply for some mo-

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ments. At length, forcing herself to speak, she said, in a low voice—

"This is some foolish lovers' quarrel, that must be made up."

"Never, Helen! It can never be made up," Joseph exclaimed, earnestly.

"Oh, but you say that because you are still very angry with her; but you are also very unhappy—you must be so; and she, no doubt, is at this moment breaking her heart——"

"She is at this moment, probably, chuckling at the idea of having got rid of a most unpromising engagement."

"You only think so; let me, an old friend, mediate between you."

"Not for the world!—not for ten thousand worlds! In this seemingly exaggerated language, Helen, I only speak the truth. Nothing in the universe would tempt me to bind myself to that fatal engagement from which I am now so honorably and so happily free!" exclaimed the young man, earnestly.

"You astonish me beyond measure! Will you explain how this occurred? I hope it was not you, Joseph, who first broke the engagement, or gave just cause to her to break it," said Helen, in a deeply interested manner.

"No; it was not I who broke the troth. Lizzy's own act this morning freed me from the consequences of a tremendous mistake that *might* have ruined her happinsss, and that *must* have ruined mine."

"But why did she do this? I hope you gave her no just cause?"

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"None."

"Why, then, was your marriage broken off?"

"Because she did not love me at all!"

"And when did she first find this out?"

"When she found out that my uncle had disinherited me, and my employers had discharged me, and that I was, in fact, an almost penniless man, without visible means of supporting a wife."

"And has your uncle indeed disinherited you?" inquired Helen, in consternation.

"He has indeed, Helen."

"But for heaven's sake, upon what account?"

"Speaking the truth."

"Speaking the truth!"

"Yes, Helen; for confessing, when the question was forced upon me, that I should not be absolutely inconsolable if he were to die."

"But how strange! Did he really expect you to be so?"

"I do not know; at all events he did not like to be told otherwise."

"Why, what an unreasonable old soul! Why, even parents do not wish their children to break their hearts from excess of filial piety at their decease."

"No; but you see uncles are more egotistical and less disinterested than parents."

"And has he really disinherited you upon this account?"

"Yes."

"What a very weak old man; and how very unfortunate that you should have been compelled by truth to cross his weakness."

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"It was, indeed."

"And you told me, I think, that your employers had——"

"Dismissed me; yes."

"Strange that two such misfortunes should have happened to you upon the same day!"

"And for the same cause, Helen."

"For the same cause?"

"Yes; for speaking the truth!"

"For speaking the truth?"

"Yes."

"How singular!—and how unlucky that you should have been obliged to speak so many offensive truths in so short a time as to deprive you at once of your inheritance and your employment. But how was it in this second instance? What fatal facts were you compelled to divulge?"

"When plainly questioned by our customers, I was obliged, in one instance, to confess that the prints marked 'fast colors' would fade; in another, that the silks marked 'French,' and 'three shillings a yard,' were inferior English, worth only two shillings; and so on through a morning of the usual cross-examination by customers to whom this morning I was resolved to answer truly."

"Ha! ha! ha!—then I do not wonder that you were discharged. And for these reasons your betrothed discarded you?"

"For these reasons, really, Helen; but ostensibly for the same cause that lost me my inheritance and my situation."

"You do not mean for speaking the truth?"

"Yes."

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"But what unpardonable truths could you have had to tell your betrothed?"

"First, that she was not an angel; secondly, that she was not even a perfect woman; thirdly, much more in the same strain."

"You were finding fault with her?"

"No, I was simply telling her the truth in reply to questions and observations she pressed upon me; nor would she have taken offence at my answers had she not been anxious for an excuse to break with me, because I had lost every thing, and was therefore no longer an eligible match for her. She would have been ashamed to have broken with me upon account of my misfortunes, but she eagerly seized upon the opportunity that my truth-telling afforded her. But I had better tell you all about it, dear Helen, and then you will understand the subject better."

And Joseph related nearly word for word all that had passed between himself and Lizzy, and ended by saying—

"Thus, you see, I made the discovery of how really selfish, hard, and treacherous was she to whom I was about to commit my whole life's welfare, and found out in the same moment that her apparent affection for me had been nothing but self-interest, and that mine for her had been a moral illusion dispelled by the touchstone of truth. So, Helen, do not condole with me, but congratulate me upon this great deliverance. Like yourself, Helen, I may never marry, but at least, thank God, I am free."

There fell a silence between them for a few moments, and then they raised their heads, and by a simultaneous impulse their eyes met.

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"Joseph," whispered Helen, in a low voice, "you promised always to tell me the truth—will you do so now?"

"Now and always, dear Helen."

"Then tell me the name of the woman whom you have so exalted in your imagination, whom you profess to admire so much, but whom, without seeming to know it, in reality you love so devotedly."

Swift baths of fire and ice seemed successively to burn and freeze his blood, as, with a voice choked with emotion, he faltered—

"Ah, Helen! one placed so high above me in worth as well as in wealth that I have never dared to hope for her love, or to acknowledge even to myself how devotedly I could have loved her had I been permitted to do so!"

"Her name—tell me her name?" whispered the young woman.

"*Helen Lyle!*" breathed the young man, sinking upon his knees, and bowing his head over her hand that he had taken.

Bending her face lowly over his auburn curls, she whispered—

"And will Helen's love console you a little for all that you have lost to-day?"

"Ah, Helen, love—best love!" cried Joseph, in a voice suffocated with emotion.

"Because, if it will, it is yours," said the girl, bending still lower over his head, and murmuring close to his ear.

Then, with gentle force, she raised him from his kneeling posture.

In another moment he was seated by her side; his tongue was loosed, and he was pouring forth, with all the elo-

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quence of passion, his long-hidden admiration, and long-sealed love, to ears that gladly listened to the tale; and then he learned how long, how exclusively, and how unchangeably Helen had loved him, even from their childhood; how she had resolved never to marry any one else; and how, when she had heard that he was to be married to Elizabeth Bell, she had still wished to befriend him, and had gone secretly to Black, Brown & Co., and had deposited five thousand pounds with them to Joseph Morriss's credit, upon condition of their taking him into partnership on his marriage.

All this came out through the obligatory truth-telling on both sides; and finally, it broke upon them like a sunburst that it was truth-telling which had brought him all this happiness at last.

"God bless the truth! Long live the truth! It got me into some ugly scrapes at first, but has brought me gloriously through them all; and henceforth will I speak the truth, and nothing but the truth, so long as I live!" exclaimed Joseph, with enthusiasm, as, late that evening, he took a happy leave of Helen Lyle, and threw himself into an up-town omnibus.

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CHAPTER VII.

"Glorious!
O'er all the ills of life victorious!"

JOSEPH MORRISS was just stepping out of the omnibus at the stand, with a face perfectly radiant with happiness, wild with joy, when a familiar voice, in a very unfamiliar tone, struck his ear, exclaiming—

"Ah! there he is, now, poor dear fellow! Thank Heaven, we have found him at last! But good gracious, how wild he do look, to be sure—for all the world as if he was a-going to leap and dance. Anybody, only to see him now, would know as how he was ramping mad. Joey, my poor dear boy, do you know your old dear aunty?" inquired good Mrs. Morriss, looking anxiously into his face.

Astonishment at this question blending with the delight that was effervescing in his heart and sparkling from his face, *did* make our hero look rather queer. Seizing his aunt's hand, and shaking it heartily in the ecstacy of his soul, he answered, joyously—

"Know you? why, what should hinder me from knowing you? To be sure I know you, Aunt Molly? And oh, aunt, I am so happy!"

"Are you, poor dear innocent?" she said, in a coaxing tone, edging cautiously away from him. Then turning to the policeman who was attending her, she whispered—

"He gets wilder and wilder: you'd better secure him at once, before he does himself or some one else a mischief.

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And you'd better slip the the cuffs on him, for fear he should break away; but oh, Mr. Policeman, don't be rougher than you can help with him, as if he was a convict, which there never was one in our family. Be gentle with him, poor misfortunate!"

Joseph Morriss, totally oblivious or incredulous about Harry Blewitt's threat of Bedlam, gazed from one to the other in wild surprise, which, joined to the excessive delight that still radiated from his face, and the authentic accounts of his strange behavior during the day, certainly warranted the strongest suspicions of his sanity. The policeman, deluded by Mrs. Morriss, and deceived by Mr. Joseph's own looks, approached him cautiously; and then, before Joseph had time to recover his astonishment, or think of resisting the outrage, this experienced man-catcher had slipped the cuffs upon the wrists of the supposed maniac, who, finding himself so unexpectedly restrained, began, too late, to struggle, stamp, and threaten, exclaiming—

"What's all this? What the deuce do you mean? Take them off this instant! What have I done? Release me, I say! I'll make you repent of this. Let me go this moment, I say!"

"Oh, deary me, oh, deary me! It's mounting higher and higher. Oh, Joey, my poor, dear innocent, do be quiet, and go with the kind gentleman. It's to do you good," coaxed Mrs. Morriss, keeping at a safe distance all the time.

"Kind gentleman! an insolent policeman, going beyond his authority. I'll pay him for it!" cried the young man, still struggling violently.

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"Oh, my poor dear boy, it's all for your own good; it's to keep you from doing mischief."

"Doing mischief! I believe you are all mad."

"Ah, that's the way with all these misfortunates; they think everybody mad but themselves," whimpered Mrs. Morriss.

"Same as drunkards, mum, as thinks every body intoxified but themselves," said the policeman, who was red in the face with his efforts to force the victim into a cab.

"As sure as I live I will punish you, you insolent wretch! and you, too, aunt," exclaimed Joseph, vindictively.

"Ah, poor dear innocent, he don't know what he's a saying of. It's the worst of these poor misfortunates as they allers turns against their best friends," sobbed the old lady.

"Sure to do it, mum: cause why? their intellectuals are bottom upwards likewise," said the hard-working officer, as the perspiration poured from his face in his efforts to master the supposed lunatic.

"Oh, Mr. Policeman, call some one to help. Cabby, why don't you help?" cried Mrs. Molly, desperately.

"Couldn't leave the horse, mum. He's frightened now, and might run away," replied the amused cabman, who enjoyed the scene much too keenly to interfere to shorten it.

"The idea of a cab-horse running away; I'd as soon expect the monument to bolt! Don't tell that to a Londoner. La! won't some of you help, gentlemen, to get this poor misfortunate young man into a cab?" said the old lady, appealing to the by-standers.

"I'll help, mum. Poor gentleman! I thought how he

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wer' addled this morning when he talked so queer, and when I axed him for a penny guv me a crown," said a man, stepping forward, and proving to be the very tramp whom Joseph had relieved in the morning.

"And did *you* see him also this morning, my good man? then come along with us and tell us all about it, how he acted, and what he said," urged Mrs. Morriss.

But the tramp was helping the policeman, and between them both Joseph Morriss, struggling, kicking, butting, biting, and resisting in every possible manner his manacled hands would permit, was forced into the cab. The policeman and the tramp jumped in after to take care of him. Mrs. Morriss, fearing to trust herself so near a madman, took another cab.

And then amid the hurrahs of the crowd that had collected to witness the fun, they drove off toward Little Britain, and drew up before the house of Mr. John Morriss.

The tramp and the policeman had made such good use of their opportunities in the cab, that they had succeeded in binding the accused maniac hand and foot; and in this helpless condition Joseph Morriss was lifted out and borne into the front parlor and deposited upon a large sofa. His veins were swollen, his face was crimson, his eyes glaring, and his mouth foaming with impotent fury; he looked, indeed, like a maniac ready to break forth into frenzy.

The room was half full of people who had come to attend his exanination, and had been impatiently awaiting his appearance.

First, there was his uncle John Morriss, who came and looked over him with a very penitent air, saying, with the tears in his eyes—

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"Ah, poor fellow! poor fellow! I'd beg his pardon if I thought he would understand a word I said!"

Then Dr. Cotton, the comfortable medical attendant of the family, who came and gazed sympathetically upon the inflamed, glaring, foaming face, and sighed, felt the bounding pulse and groaned; and, lastly, looked around on the assembled friends and shook his head.

"What do you think, doctor? Hadn't we better get him off at once to some asylum where he can be taken care of?" inquired the affectionate but cowardly and terrified Mrs. Morriss.

"I would rather question some of the friends who have observed his manners during the day, before I give a final opinion," said Dr. Cotton.

About a half-dozen men and women started forward and began all to speak at once.

"One at a time! One at a time my dear, dear, good friends! Mrs. Morriss, do you speak first, and pray tell us what you observed in the appearance of your nephew when he first came down in the morning?" inquired Dr. Cotton.

"La, doctor! when he entered the breakfast-room, which is just behind this room, you know, he looked very odd about the eyes, and said his head felt queer."

"Yes, and then?"

"Why, then, all of a sudden, without any provocation from us at all, he broke out quite savage and said he didn't care if we were both dead the next minute, and frightened me and his uncle terribly, and then burst away, and ran out of the house," said Mrs. Molly, quite unconscious of the ex-

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aggeration of her statement, which put so different a face upon the scene she attempted to describe.

"Dear, dear, dear, how shocking! And you also witnessed this strange behavior, Mr. Morriss?" said the doctor, appealing to old John.

"Yes; though so little did I then suspect that the poor lad's wits were leaving him, that I got angry and said how I would cut him off with a shilling!"

"And yet you might have known it, John, for he never *did* behave so before, and his attack on us was quite unprovoked," said Mrs. Molly.

"True, true, all true," groaned poor old John.

"Well, now, Mr. Black, will you tell us——"

"If you please, sir, I should like to be questioned, as I believe 'ow I was the next person has saw Mr. Joseph Morriss hafter 'e left 'is huncle's 'ouse."

"Oh! and who are you, my good woman?" inquired the doctor.

"Hi'm Miss Robinson, and as hi was in town this hevening to 'ear Mr. Sturm, hi 'appened also to 'ear what was a going on at the 'ouse, and thought 'ou I would come in and give my own hevivence."

"And what do you know of the affair, Mrs. ——, Mrs. ——."

"*Miss* —— and *Robinson*, sir: that's my name, Miss Robinson."

"Well, what can you tell us of Mr. Morriss's deportment to-day, Miss Robinson?"

"Well, sir, I met 'im as I was coming out of Black's, and 'e was going 'hin. And 'is conduct was most hodd."

"In what respect, Miss Robinson?"

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"Why, sir, it most heccentric."

"How?"

"Well, sir, most hextraordinary."

"You must be more explicit, Miss Robinson. Tell us what he said or did."

"Well, sir, first—'e ran against me with all 'is force, and butted me in the breast, which I would 'ave hoverlooked if it 'adn't been for the rest."

"What else?"

"'E talked in the most hextragant way, sir; 'e said 'ow my bonnet was too young for such an *hold* woman, too light for such an *'eavy* woman, and too helegant for hany waiting-woman; which it stands to reason, sir, 'e must 'ave been very much hintoxified, which, as it was early in the morning, 'e could not 'ave been, or helse 'e was very mad to have thought such things of my bonnet and me!"

"Humph, I should take this statement as strong rebutting testimony against the charge of insanity, if I did not know from experience that madmen often have a great deal of malacious wit," said the doctor, in a low voice, turning to old John Morriss. Then resuming his examination of Miss Robinson, he asked—

"Any thing else?"

"Yes, sir, 'e called me a stout hold waiting-woman—hover-dressed! w'ich you'll hadmit, doctor, for saying that 'e *hought* to 'ave the shower waistcoat and the straight bath administered, and not to be hallowed to go about hinsulting people with 'is hexcentricities."

"He will, probably, be restrained, Miss Robinson! You may sit down now," said the doctor.

Miss Robinson withdrew, taking care to make an awful

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grimace at the bonnet victim as she passed him, as much as to say—

"Hif I can only get you into the mad 'ouse for calling me stout and 'eavy, I'll do it!"

Joseph Morriss laughed. He had sufficiently recovered from his first astonishment and indignation to be able to control himself and watch the proceedings with some degree of interest and amusement. But his laughing at all under such circumstances was considered another proof of his madness, and was immediately received in evidence against him.

"And now, Mr. Black," said the doctor.

The senior partner of B. B. W. and G. came forward, and said—

"I can only say that his conduct in our shop this morning was that of a man entirely bereft of his senses. It is altogether unlike his usual conduct. I had never seen any thing like it before."

"Pray explain what he said and did."

"Well, sir, he drove away every customer from our shop! every one, sir. I do assure you upon my honor."

"Shocking! I had no idea that he had broken out into such violence!"

"Violence! why, sir, when we attempted to expostulate with him and control him, he assailed us with the most awful abuse, called us cheats, and swindlers, and every other bad name that he could lay his tongue to!"

"Dear, dear me! how dreadful."

"Yes, sir, and finally he leaped upon his feet, cleared the counter at a single bound, and rushed into the street!"

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"Good heaven, how terrible! but had any thing happened to excite or anger him?"

"Nothing whatever, sir; we were all upon the very best terms that morning."

"And what did the poor young man do next?"

"I really do not know," said Mr. Black, who, prepossessed now with the idea of Joseph's insanity, was probably quite unconscious of the gross misrepresentations in his statement.

"Please, your honor, it wur me as met the young gent fust arter he run out of Black's," said the tramp, coming forward, and pulling his forelock.

"Well, tell us all about it?"

"Vy, you see, zur, as I was standing in o' Black's, vaiting to open carriage-door for a penny, ven all of a suddent this young gent spins out of the door as if the Old Nick had pitched him; and he looks up and down the street wild as luny, and, sez he, 'vat shall I do?' and then I made so bold to hint as to give a poor man a penny moight be about the right thing to do. And he answered how *he didn't see it*, and *he was another*, and *served me right*, and all such like-randomy talk as had nothink to do with what I axed him. And then, zur, he went to moaning and complaining, and bewailing hisself, 'acause he said he hadn't a wife and fifteen small children mostly twins, specially the three last; which your honor will own no man, unless he was stark mad, would ever want, and which it is clear this young gent could not possibly a' had even if he'd got married at ten years old!"

"Well, well, never mind that! What next?"

"Why, he tossed me a crown, and made off with himself;

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and that was all I saw of him until I saw him in a raving-mad fit at the 'bus stand, and was called to help to take him—and a job we had of it. I'll never help to take a mad man again, I'm bit in a dozen places at least; look here! and here! and here!" said the man, showing the wounds received in the conflict.

"Shocking! absolutely shocking!"

"Now, zur, as you're a medical man, I'll like you to tell me if it's dangerous, and if I'm like to go mad along of it; and if so be I am, I'd thank you to give me an ante—whats-its-name, to stop it."

"You are not in any danger; the bite of a maniac does not cause hydrophobia like that of a rabid dog, so that you will not require an antidote. You may go."

The tramp did not "go," he was too much interested in the proceedings; but he withdrew to an obscure corner of the room, and stood watching the scene, quite unsuspicious of the gross exaggeration in his testimony.

"Now, friends, if there is any one here who saw this unhappy young man in the next stage of his proceedings, I should like to hear their account of it," said the doctor.

"Come, my poor darling, come! it is unpleasant, I know, but it's your bounden duty," said Mrs. Molly, urging forward a young girl, whom she at length led up to the doctor, saying—"Here, doctor, this is Miss Bell, poor child; she saw Joseph early in the afternoon; they were to have been married soon, poor children, but Lord! Lord! who can tell what a day may bring forth!"

"How did Mr. Morriss appear when you saw him, my child?" inquired the doctor.

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Lizzy had her face buried in her pocket-handkerchief, and was sobbing, or pretending to sob, as she answered—

"He came to see me at about one o'clock this afternoon, and he behaved most cruel, violent, and insulting to me!"

"Tell me, my dear, what he did and said?"

"He frowned at me, and stared at me horribly—enough to frighten me out of my wits, and he called me a perfect fright, and a regular devil!"

This was Lizzy's translation of the mild and truthful phrases "not a beauty," and "by no means an angel." But Miss Lizzy was fortunately not upon her oath.

"And what else, my dear?"

"Oh, a great deal more of the same sort. And please don't ask me any more, it was so dreadful! it almost frightened me to death! and now I hope nobody will expect me to keep my engagement and marry a madman, because I can't do it!" sobbed Lizzy.

"Certainly not, my child! at least, not at present," said the benevolent doctor, who was too much impressed by Miss Lizzy's infantile beauty to perceive her heartlessness.

"No, neither at present nor in the future! I want that to be distinctly understood, for I think that when an engagement is broken off, especially with a madman, it had better never be renewed," said the selfish and cautious Miss Lizzy.

"Yes, my darling; it shall be just as you say. Poor thing! she is so frightened and upset by all things, that she doesn't know what she is talking about," said Mrs. Molly, leading her away.

"Yes, but I *do* know what I am talking about; and I

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ning's beer, and in this manner reached the ears of Miss Lyle herself, who, believing that some great injustice must have been perpetrated, ordered her horses and drove to town. She did me the honor to call at my lodgings, and request me to attend her hither. Her requests had all the force of commands, and I came hither with pleasure, especially as I happen to possess the key of Morriss's insanity. But first permit me to release my friend."

And after depositing Helen Lyle in an arm-chair, Blewitt drew a penknife from his pocket, opened it, advanced toward Joseph Morriss, and before the astounded company suspected his intention, he had cut the cords that bound the captive, and set him upon his feet.

"What are you about?" cried the doctor.

"He is mad!" exclaimed Mr. John.

"Furious!" cried Mrs. Molly.

"He'll do mischief!" said the doctor.

"He'll hurt some one!" said Mr. John.

"He'll drown himself, poor fellow!" wept Mrs. Molly.

"E'll break hall our 'eads, and set the 'ouse on fire!" shrieked Miss Robinson, doubling the uproar, while every one shrank away to distant parts of the room to get as far as possible from the loose madman.

"He'll do nothing of the sort. The only harm he is likely to do you will be to prosecute the whole lot of you for assault, and afterwards sue you for slander! Mr. Morriss, your nephew is no more mad than you or I."

"You know nothing about it, sir! He is as mad as a March hare!"

"On the contrary, I know all about it, as I will soon

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prove to you. It is now just ten o'clock," said Blewitt, taking out and consulting his watch, "consequently, it is just twenty-four hours since this time last evening, when Joseph Morriss and myself were coming out of Mr. Sturm's chapel, after hearing that reverend gentleman's terrific sermon upon lying. Upon that occasion I laid a sort of wager with my friend Morriss that he could not speak the truth, even in answer to customary questions, for one day, without being turned off by his uncle, discharged by his employers, and discarded by his sweetheart; and, furthermore, that he could not continue to speak it for a week without getting into the lunatic asylum. Joseph Morriss, was not this our compact?"

"Yes," said Joseph, "it was."

"The experiment has succeeded beyond my utmost expectations, for I find that my friend has spoken the truth in answer to the simple common questions of the day for just fifteen hours, and the worst that I predicted has happened to him. Joseph Morriss, speak now, and answer for yourself."

"Yes," said Joseph; "in answer to the simplest and most commonplace questions, I have mildly answered the truth only since seven o'clock this morning, and I have been subjected to extreme loss and degrading outrage. Uncle," he continued, turning to old John, "if you will candidly recall the scene of the morning, you will find it was very different from that which the fears of yourself and my aunt imagined and described. The worst I said was that I should not break my heart if you both should die——"

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"Yes, Joseph, but you see, I thought by your saying *that* you meant a great deal more."

"That was because you were not accustomed to hearing simple truth."

"Well, well, my boy, now I understand it all, I am sure I beg your pardon."

"No; say you forgive me, uncle! that is all I require."

"Very well, then, have it your own way! I am so glad that you are neither ungrateful nor mad—which is the same as saying that you are neither heartless nor brainless, that I am willing either to grant you my pardon or to beg yours!" said the old man, extending his hand to Joseph, who seized it and shook it warmly.

"Miss Robinson, I have no other defence to make to *your* accusation than this, that you appealed to my judgment as to the propriety of your dress, and I gave my opinion in all sincerity."

"You 'ould your tongue!" retorted the abigail.

"Mr. Black, as to *your* statement, that I drove your customers from your shop, I have only to explain that I did so by telling them the truth as to the worthless quality and exaggerated prices of your goods. If this truth-telling has injured you, you have your remedy in a suit for damages against me; though I scarcely think you will care to make the matter so public!"

"You are beneath my notice, sir!" said Black, turning away.

"And you," said Joseph, turning to the tramp, "I told *you* no unpleasant truths; I did not hurt *your* feelings, or

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